

Message Text

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12

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 INR-07 PRS-01 SS-15 H-02 L-03 /041 W
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P R 081050Z SEP 76

FM AMCONSUL MUNICH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7445

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MUNICH 2100

STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: RFE-FINANCED OPINION SURVEYS

REF: (A) MUNICH 2092 (B) MUNICH 2080

1. CONGEN HAS JUST ACQUIRED ON STRICTLY INFORMAL BASIS COPY
OF SEPT 7 MESSAGE FROM RFE/RL EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
(MUNICH) TO RFE/RL HEADQUARTERS IN WASHINGTON:

"A. ON SEPT. 4 AND 6 SWEDISH TELEVISION CARRIED REPORTS
THAT SWEDEN'S LEADING OPINION POLLING INSTITUTE, SIFO, IS
UNDER CONTRACT TO RFE (THOUGH AT LEAST ONE SWEDISH NEWSPAPER
ACCOUNT ABOUT THE TV REPORT SAID 'RADIO LIBERATION'). TV
REPORT CHARGED THAT IN PROBING RADIO LISTENING HABITS OF
EAST EUROPEAN VISITORS TO SWEDEN, SIFO WAS FERRETTING OUT
NAMES OF POTENTIAL DEFECTORS FOR CIA.

N.B. WE HAVE TEXTS OF SEVERAL RELATED SWEDISH NEWSPAPER
STORIES WHICH WE WILL TRANSMIT TO YOU AS SOON AS THEY ARE
TRANSLATED. WE ARE ALSO MAKING EFFORTS TO OBTAIN TEXT OF
TV REPORTS.

"B. ON READING NEWSPAPER REPORTS IT BECOMES
CLEAR THAT TV ATTACK ON SIFO WAS DESIGNED TO UNDERMINE
CONFIDENCE IN SIFO WHICH HAS DONE POLL ON UPCOMING
SWEDISH ELECTIONS SHOWING THAT PRIME MINISTER PALME'S
PARTY MAY BE IN TROUBLE.

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"C. UNDERSTAND AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM ASKED WHAT OTHER RADIO LISTENER STUDY ARRANGEMENTS, IF ANY, U.S. INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTERS HAVE IN SWEDEN. FYI: RL HAS NONE. RFE HAS FOR NEARLY 14 YEARS USED COPENHAGEN FIRM, SAUERBERG, FOR SWEDISH (REPAT SWEDISH) STUDIES, ALSO RFE IS DOING SOME WORK WITH SCANFACT IN STOCKHOLM OWNED BY BURKE IN USA.

"D. NOW THAT LABOR DAY WEEKEND IS OVER, WE FEAR THAT EMBASSY (WHICH IS ACCUSTOMED TO APPROVING OR DISAPPROVING USIA OPIONION SURVEYS AND VOA LISTENERS' SURVEYS IN SWEDEN) MAY BELIEVE IT SHOULD EXERCISE SUCH AUTHORITY OVER RFE AND REGISTER displeasure over not being consulted.

"E. IN THIS CONNECTION HOPE YOU CAN ORGANIZE SOLID BIB SUPPORT OUR SIDE. RECENT BIB REVIEW HERE PROVED ONCE AGAIN TO ARMITAGE AND CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS INESTIMABLE VALUE OF APOR RESEARCH. AS INDEPENDENT RADIO ENTERPRISE WE MUST HAVE FREEDOM TO DO LISTENER RESEARCH WITHOUT REFERENCE TO EMBASSIES. EMBASSIES, IF QUERIED BY HOST GOVERNMENTS ON RFE OR RFE LISTENER SURVEYS, SHOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO CITE RECENT SEC STATE LETTER ON NON-CONNECTION OF RFE/RL WITH CIA AND SHOULD underscore that as independent radio enterprise, RFE has right to engage commercial firms to do radio listening surveys in any "open society" country.

"F. SUGGEST ABSHIRE BE GIVEN COPY OF THIS MESSAGE WITHOUT DELAY AND THAT HE CONTACT WHOEVER IS ACTING FOR ARMITAGE AT STATE.

"G. RE SEC KISSINGER'S 28 AUGUST LETTER TO ABSHIRE, BELIEVE IT WOULD BE VERY USEFUL, GIVEN MOUNTING USSR AND EAST EUROPEAN ATTACKS ON RADIOS, IF HE COULD PERSUADE STATE TO HAVE USIA WIRELESS FILE CARRY LETTER WORLD-WISE."

2. COMMENT: WE ARE DISTURBED BY RADIOS' CONTENTION (PARA E) THAT THEY "MUST HAVE FREEDOM TO DO LISTENER CONFIDENTIAL

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RESEARCH WITHOUT REFERENCE TO EMBASSIES." THERE IS, OF COURSE, POSSIBILITY THAT BIB WILL NOT RPT NOT AGREE. DEPARTMENT SHOULD HOWEVER, BE PREPARED ON CONTINGENCY BASIS TO TAKE ON BIB ON THIS ISSUE.

3. RFE/RL ARE NOT NOT AWARE THAT CONGEN IS PASSING TEXT OF ONE OF THEIR INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS.
BETTS

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